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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/044,205

10/22/2001

Rosana Kapeller-Libermann

10147-52U1  
(MPI2000-438P1)

9746

7590

09/27/2004

EXAMINER

YU, MISOOK

Intellectual Property Group  
Millennium Pharmaceuticals, Inc.  
75 Sidney Street  
Cambridge, MA 02139

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1642

DATE MAILED: 09/27/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/044,205

Applicant(s)

KAPELLER-LIBERMANN ET AL.

Examiner

MISOOK YU, Ph.D.

Art Unit

1642

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 July 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 76-82 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 76-82 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 07/06/04, 09/23/02.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Election/Restrictions***

Applicant's election of group I in the reply filed on 07/06/2004 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

Claims 76-82 are pending and examined on merits.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101***

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 76-82 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is not supported by either a specific and substantial asserted utility or a well established utility.

Claims 76-82 are interpreted as drawn to nucleic acid molecule comprising either SEQ ID NO:1, or 2 or nucleic acid molecule encoding SEQ ID NO:2 protein. The specification speculates that the claimed invention have utilities in screening assays pharmacodynamic marker, pharmaceutical compositions, making antibody, methods of treatment, prophylactic methods, and pharmacogenomics. These utilities are not considered to be specific and substantial because neither the specification nor any art of record teaches what the biological activities of SEQ ID NO:2.

Although the specification speculates possible SEQ ID NO:2 is predicted to have similar biological activities as GPCRK family member based on homology, the

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specification fails to teach what kind(s) biological activity the protein carries out, other than listing all the possible activities of the family have at page 21.

The art generally acknowledges that function cannot be predicted based solely on structural similarity to a protein found in the sequence databases. Scott et al (Nature Genetics, 1999, 21:440-443) teach that the function of newly identified gene products is unpredictable even when the database searches reveal significant homology to proteins of known function. Scott et al teaches that the gene causing Pendred syndrome encodes a putative transmembrane protein designated pendrin. Based on sequence similarity data, the authors postulated that the putative protein was deemed to be a member of sulfate transport proteins that included a 29% identity to rat sulfate-anion transporter, 32% similarity to human diastrophic dysplasia sulfate transporter, and 45% similarity to the human sulfate transporter 'downregulated in adenoma'. However, upon analyzing the expression and kinetics of the protein, the data revealed no evidence of sulfate transport wherein results revealed that pendrin functioned as a transporter of chloride and iodide. Scott et al. states that these results underscore the importance of confirming the function of newly identified gene products even when the database searches reveal significant homology to proteins of known function (page 411, 1<sup>st</sup> column, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph). Skolnick et al. (2000, Trends in Biotech. 18:34-39) state that knowing the protein structure by itself is insufficient to annotate a number of functional classes, and is also insufficient for annotating the specific details of protein function (see Box 2, p. 36). Similarly, Bork (2000, Genome Research 10:398-400) states that the error rate of functional annotations in the sequence database is considerable, making it

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even more difficult to infer correct function from a structural comparison of a new sequence with a sequence database (see especially p. 399). Such concerns are also echoed by Doerks et al. (1998, Trends in Genetics 14:248-250) who state that (1) functional information is only partially annotated in the database, ignoring multi functionality, resulting in underpredictions of functionality of a new protein and (2) overpredictions of functionality occur because structural similarity often does not necessarily coincide with functional similarity. Smith et al. (1997, Nature Biotechnology 15:1222-1223) remark that there are numerous cases in which proteins having very different functions share structural similarity due to evolution from a common ancestral gene. Brenner (1999, Trends in Genetics 15:132-133) argues that accurate inference of function from homology must be a difficult problem since, assuming there are only about 1000 major gene superfamilies in nature, then most homologs must have different molecular and cellular functions. Bork et al. (1996, Trends in Genetics 12:425-427) add that the software robots that assign functions to new proteins often assign a function to a whole new protein based on structural similarity of a small domain of the new protein to a small domain of a known protein. Such questionable interpretations are written into the sequence database and are then considered facts. Finally, Bowie et al. (1990, Science 247:1306-1310) state that determination of three dimensional structure from primary amino acid sequence, and the subsequent inference of detailed aspects of function from structure is extremely complex and unlikely to be solved in the near future (p. 1306). Thus, the specification fails to support the asserted credible, specific and substantial utility of the newly identified instantly claimed protein.

Furthermore, the specification does not teach a relationship to any specific disease or establish any involvement the instantly claimed invention in the etiology of any specific disease. The specification does not teach a relationship between the different tissue distribution of the claimed invention to any specific disease or etiology of any specific disease, either. The specification does not have any specific and substantial use for the antibodies, either. Making and purifying the protein, hybridization probes, antisense, use as query sequence, and the various assays recited in the instant application do not lead to substantial and specific uses of the claimed invention due to unknown functions of the claimed invention. Nothing is specific to the sequences of the claimed invention for all of the various probe uses. Any nucleic acid can be used to, identify polymorphisms, or pharmacogenomic uses. The specification does not have any substantial use for pharmaceutical compositions, predictive medicine, diagnostic assay, prognostic assays, monitoring effects during clinical trials, and methods of treatment because the specification does not teach what disease(s) is caused by malfunction of the claimed invention or the protein encoded by it.

After further research, a specific and substantial credible utility might be found for the claimed invention. This further characterization, however, is part of the act of invention and until it has been undertaken, applicant's claimed invention is not complete.

In *Brenner v. Manson*, 148 U.S.P.Q. 689 (Sup. Ct., 1966), a process of producing a novel compound that was structurally analogous to other compounds which were known to possess anti-cancer activity was alleged to be useful because the compound

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produced thereby was potentially useful as an anti-tumor agent in the absence of evidence supporting this utility. The court expressed the opinion that all chemical compounds are "useful" to the chemical arts when this term is given its broadest interpretation. However, the court held that this broad interpretation was not the intended definition of "useful" as it appears in 35 U.S.C. § 101, which requires that an invention must have either an **immediately obvious or fully disclosed "real world" utility**. The instant claims are drawn to antibody to a newly identified human cDNA which has undetermined function or biological significance. Until some actual and specific activity can be attributed to the protein identified in the specification as SEQ ID NO:2 or the polynucleotides encoding it, the claimed invention is incomplete.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 76-82 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph. Specifically, since the claimed invention is not supported by either a substantial asserted utility or a well established utility for the reasons set forth above, one skilled in the art clearly would not know how to use the claimed invention.

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MISOOK YU, Ph.D. whose telephone number is 571-

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272-0839. The examiner can normally be reached on 8 A.M. to 5:30 P.M., every other Friday off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeffrey C Siew can be reached on 571-272-0787. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

MISOOK YU, Ph.D.  
Examiner  
Art Unit 1642



LARRY R. HELMS, PH.D.  
PRIMARY EXAMINER